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WIDENER



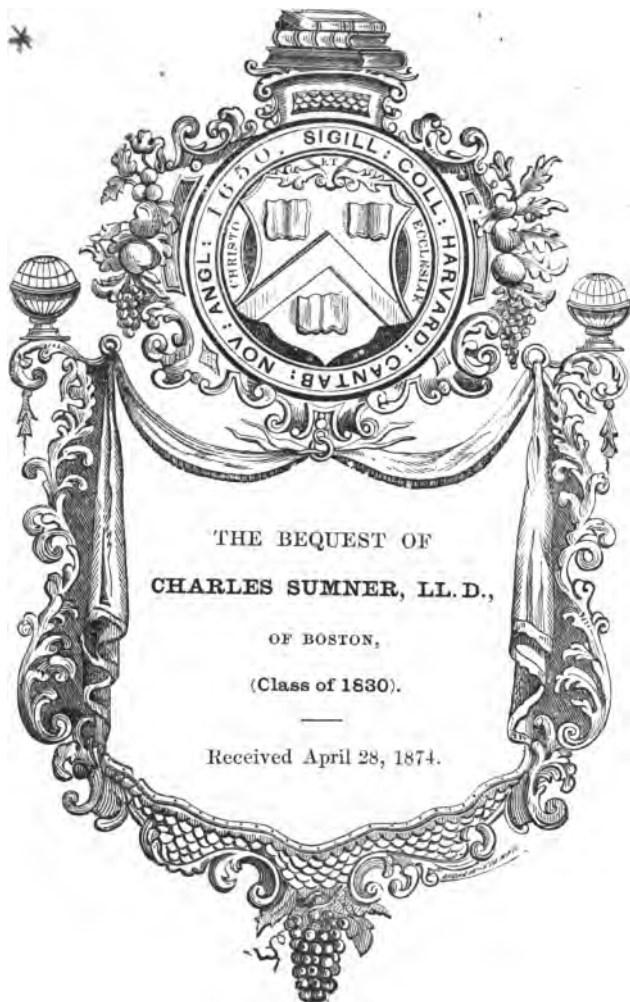
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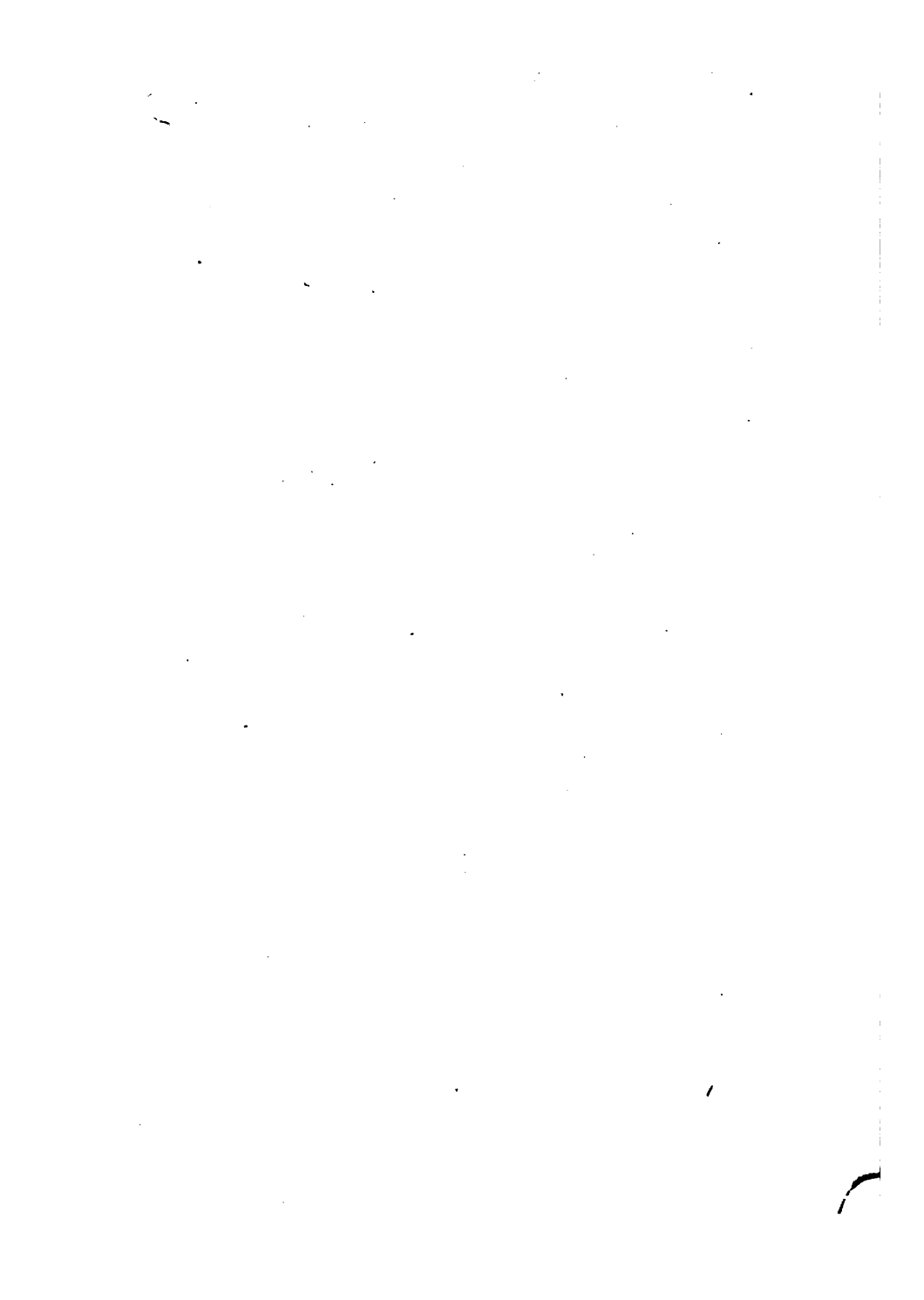


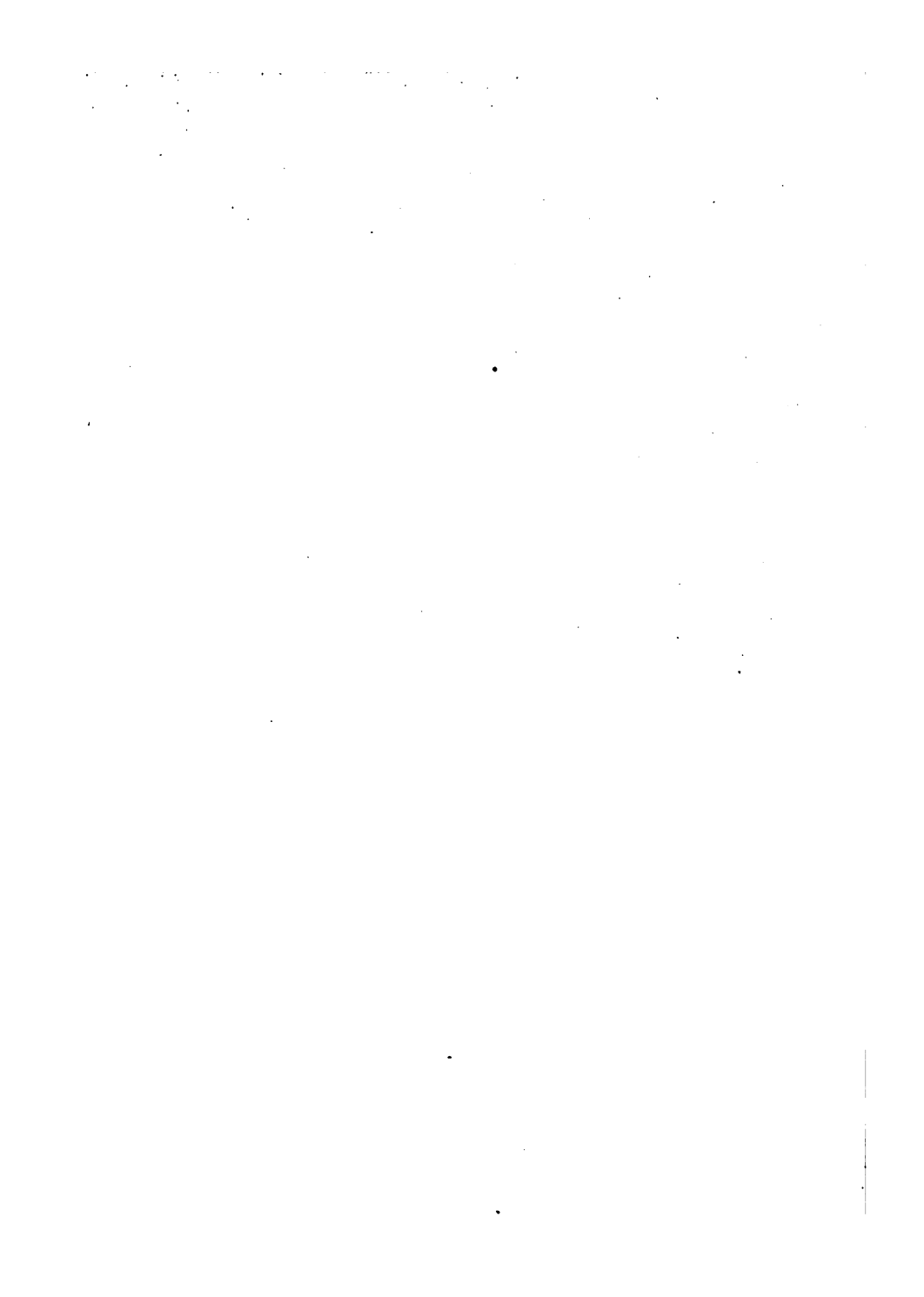
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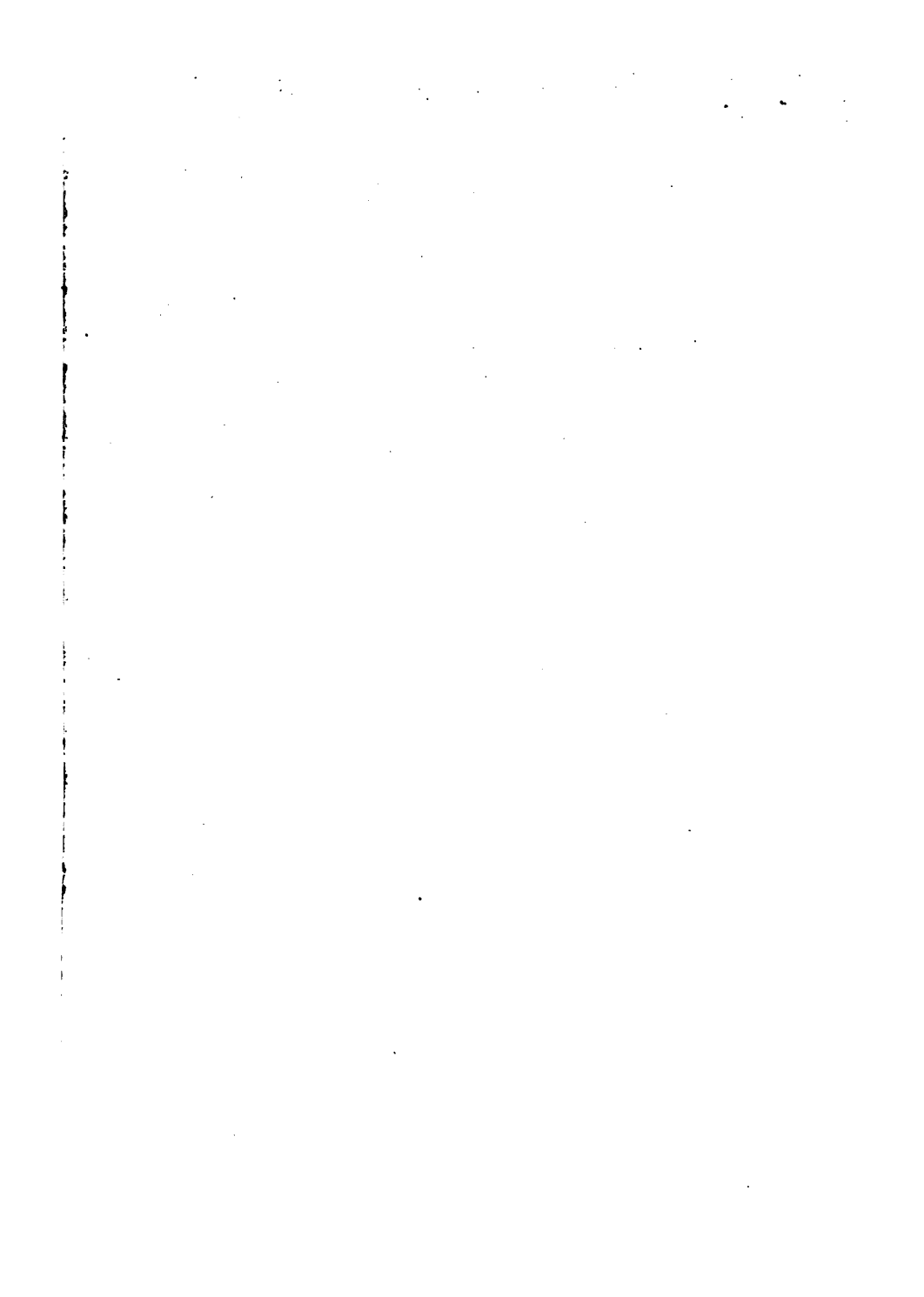
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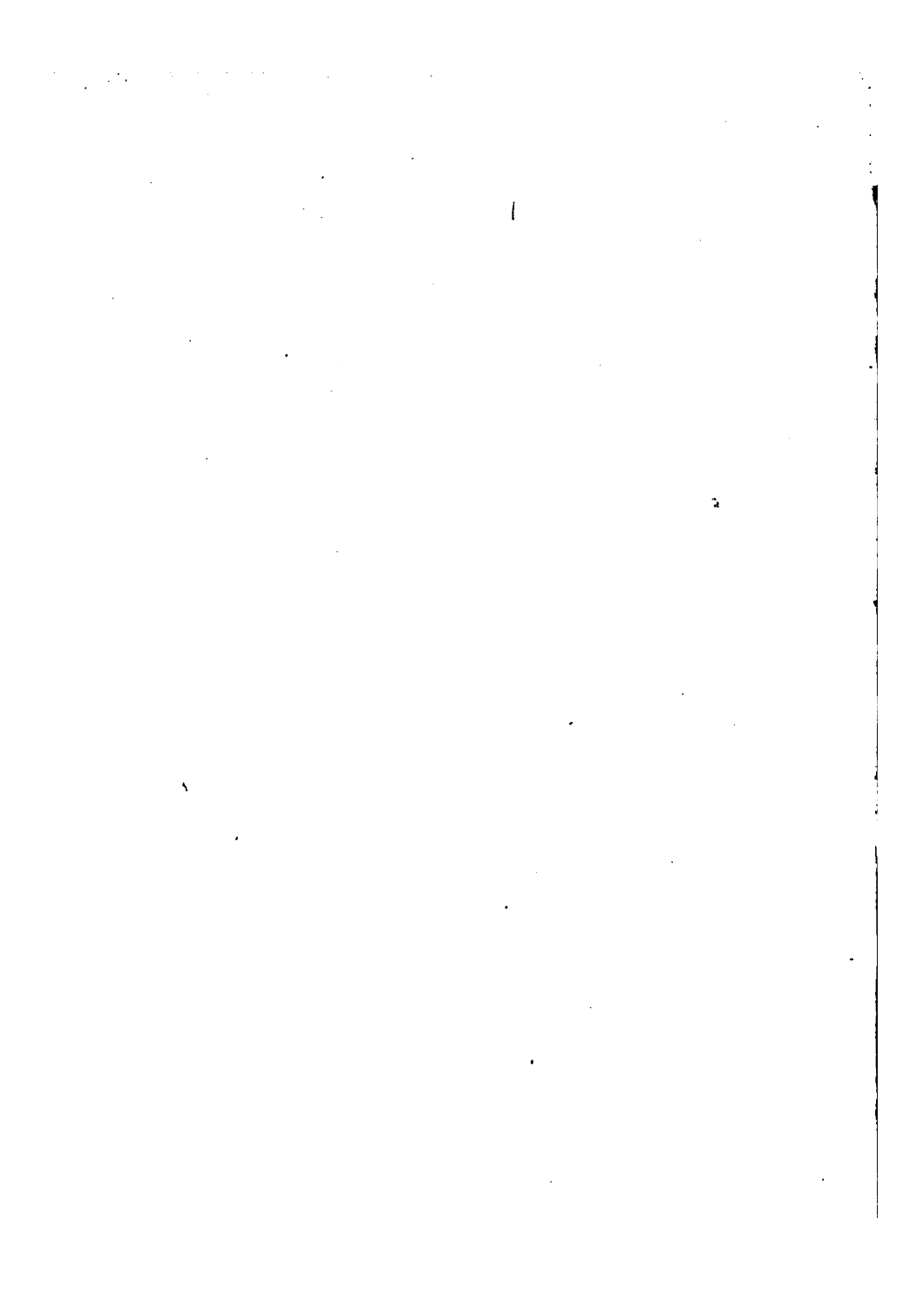
Recd. June 1875











Charles Sumner, Esq.
with the Author's best regards
Yours.

February. 18. 1839.
London.

22



GRAPHIDÆ,

OR

CHARACTERISTICS OF PAINTERS.

37 1/2 127 5

"Jeder Character wird Dir ein eigenes Gemahle seyn, und Du wirst eine herrliche Gallerie von Bildnissen zum Spiegel Deines Geistes um Dich her versammelt haben."

Tieck's Phantasien.

By Henry Reece.

PRIVATELY PRINTED.

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1874, April 28,
Bequest of
Hon. Chas. Sumner.
(H. 26.1830.)

THESE compositions were first written down as a kind of sport in art, to describe the painters to whom they severally relate by some awakened association with a favourite picture, or some general characteristic of the artist's genius. They are here preserved, because it is pleasant to connect the impression produced on the mind by a work of art with any familiar expression in language which the mind may chance to have retained.

Some of these little sketches have become more serious than the design which prompted them : in some perhaps

the tone of criticism has deadened the lively flow of sentiment which they were meant to convey : I am content if in any of them the Idea of the great works and minds of Artists has been partially approached.

Yet in offering this slight Volume to the few friends to whom it can be an acceptable gift, the author has the pleasure of fancying that he may share their thoughts when they return to the works of the masters to whom these lines refer : and to the indulgence of such readers at such times, he commends this Book.

H. R.

GRAPHIDÆ.

A DRAWING BY GIOTTO,

DATED 1315.

Credette Cimabue nella pittura
Tener lo campo ; ed ora ha Giotto il grido
Si che la fama di colui s' oscura.

Dante, Purg. xi. 97.

O'ER these faint lines perchance did Dante bend,
And watched the pencil of his solemn friend ;
Smiled in his sacred musings as he saw
New forms conceived in love, evoked in awe,
Such as in visions he himself had known,—
Giotto's the lines—the spirit was his own.

PIETRO PERUGINO.

Sacrifico laudem Sanctificatori meo, quoniam pulchra trajecta per animas in manus artificiosas ab illâ pulchritudine veniunt quæ super animas est, cui suspirat anima mea die ac nocte.

Sanct. Augustin. Confess. x. c. 34.

How calm and beautiful when Art was young
 The Seraph-sisters o'er the Painter hung,
 Ere his deep power was strained by passions rude,
 Or scattered in delicious lassitude!
 Pure as the lily in her own long hands,
 • Bent like some humbler flower, the Virgin stands,
 Whilst by the grace which from her forehead shone
 The Church made Art's great progeny its own.

FRA BARTOLOMEO DI SAN MARCO.

Antonio. Meint ihr, dass unare Kunst so viel vermag ?

Silvestro. Sie ist die schöne Brücke, Regenbogen

Die zwischen Erd' und Himmel ausgespannt ist.

Antonio. Das ist die Religion.

Correggio, von Ehlen schläger.

By gnawing fasts, by vigils kept apart,
 The Monk subdued the blandishments of Art,
 Lest he should lend one transient grace of Earth
 To the pure Mother of her Maker's birth.
 Cold penitents now shiver round his cell,
 And meagre saints devoutly terrible ;
 Yet cherubs linger o'er the sad abode,
 And penance' self reserves a smile for God.

THE TWO ANGELS.

Adam ! I therefore came : nor art thou such
Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
As may not oft invite, though Spirits of Heaven,
To visit thee.

Parad. Lost, book v.

THE two Archangels who have thrones above,
The one as Lord of Power, the one of Love,
In their great service from Creation's birth,
Have been the Watchers and the Friends of Earth,
To hurl the Dragon from his guilty seat,
To make the breath of life more wise and sweet ;
And thus when Art was deckt by hands divine,
Power still was Michael's gift,—Love, Raphael, thine !

MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI.

'Εν ἀνδρῶν, ἐν θεῶν γένος· ἐκ
 Μίας δὲ πνεομεν
 Μᾶτρος ἀμφοτεροί.
 Διαιργεῖ δὲ πᾶσα κεκριμένα
 Δύναμις—
 ἀλλὰ τι προσφερομεν
 Ἐμπαν, ἡ μέγαν νοον ἡ-
 τοι φύσιν, ἀθανάτοισ.

Pindar, Nem. vi.

HE ranged the Host of Heaven: the Seraphim
 Oped the bright eye and stretched the sturdy limb;
 Man stood majestic in the strength of years,
 And woman's beauty shone undimmed by tears,—
 With Heaven's high valour on the strenuous brow,
 With power to conquer fiends whose frauds they know,
 He formed the Angel-warriors for such strife,—
 God saw the work was good, and gave them life.

RAFFAELLE.

Rapt with the rage of mine own ravisht thought,
 Through contemplation of these goodly sights,
 And glorious images in Heaven wrought,
 Whose wondrous beautie, breathing sweet delights,
 Doth kindle love in high conceived sprights,
 I fain to tell the things that I behold,
 But feel my wits to faile and tongue to fold.

Spenser, Hymn of Heavenly Beautie.

A MOTHER's beauty when her babe is waking,
 That babe's soft limbs from noonday slumber breaking,
 The angelic smile that ripples woman's face,
 And the delicious glow of youthful grace—
 Wrought in the fondest harmony of art—
 Were his least gifts,—his fine terrestrial part.

Mother of Christ! devoutly dignified,
 Clasp, clasp thine awful Babe in tender pride;
 Whilst cherubs hovering in the azure blaze
 Bend on His face the rapture of their gaze.

Such mystic splendours shook the Holy Mount,
Such streams of glory shot from Mercy's fount,
When God's great Saints descended from above,
And Man was all transfigured into Love.

LEONARDO DA VINCI.

I judge him of a rectified spirit,
 In his bright reason's influence, refined
 Above the tartarous moods of common men ;
 Bearing the nature and similitude
 Of a right heavenly body ; most serene
 In fashion and collection of himself ;
 And then as clear and confident as Jove.

Ben Jonson, Poetaster.

HE swept away all chilling clouds from sense,
 Love burned more sacred, wisdom more intense ;
 And each pure image mystically caught
 The subtle light of some eternal thought.

The richest bloom upon those features lies,
 Dimpled and arched with woman's courtesies ;
 Soft music still, methinks, is whispering there,
 As if Religion spread from one so fair.
 That dovelike sweetness, knit to reason's power,
 Bade the sage listen and the saint adore,

When the good Saviour brake the food he blest,
Though Hell grew human in the Traitor's breast,
And the serene expectance of His eye
Weighed Man's dread question, 'Master! is it I?'

CORREGGIO.

Shadows are moving light ;
 And is there aught so moving as is this ?

Drummond of Hawthornden.

O'ER rounded shapes a star of love is glowing
 In radiance through transparent shadows flowing ;
 The world's night-textured curtain, dim and dun,
 Is melted by a light before the Sun,—
 That light of all the earth, that healing splendour
 So white and heavenly,—yet so soft and tender ;
 The woodland Penitent, who musing lay,
 Feels the sweet glory melt her sins away ;
 And holy transport radiates through the gloom
 Which thickens round the mystery of the Tomb.

Or Venus, rainbow-wing'd, with sportive joy,
Smiles showers of bliss upon her darling boy,
Where the green depth of Art's enchanted grove
Hides the forsaken shrine of Pagan love.

DOMENICHINO.

Must you have my picture? But, indeed,
 If ever I would have mine drawn to the life,
 I would have a painter steal it at such time
 I were devoutly kneeling at my prayers;
 There is then a heavenly beauty in 't, the soul
 Moves in the superficies.

Old Play.

O'ER the calm mirror, whose cœrulean breast
 Might float a spirit in her charmed nest,
 The Heavens drop sweetness, and their fragrant rain
 Wakes Eden's garden into bloom again.
 That Muse has Angels for her audience,
 Who hover on the harp-notes' sweet suspense;
 Unearthly passion gems that Sibyl-eye,
 In which dark spells and hot affections lie;
 And John's pure gaze, in Heaven's own light sublime,
 Rifts the great veil that curtains Man in Time.

GIORGIONE.

Auch ich war in Arcadien geboren,
 Auch mir hat die Natur
 An meiner Wiege Freude zugeschworen ;
 Auch ich war in Arcadien geboren
 Doch Thränen gab der kurze Lenz mir nur.

Schiller, Resignation.

A GLOBE of tinted opal was his world,
 Round which the heat of fragrant vapours curled ;
 He dreamed of Life,—a gorgeous holiday,
 With women born to queen it in the May,
 And men enamoured to such perfect fire,
 As made their heart-strings tremble with desire.
 Ah ! He who dreamed that world in sadness dies ;
 The snake still haunts the meads of Paradise :
 And that voluptuous soul the pang must prove
 Of Envy's venom on the flowers of Love.

PAOLO VERONESE.

Most potent, grave, and reverend Signors !

Othello.

IN mitred state and sacred linen fold,
 With hood and tunic wrought in cloth of gold,
 Saint, pontiff, noble in the gauds of power
 Record the legend of an humbler hour ;
 But in the midst some simple form divine
 Marks the pure Godhead of that gorgeous shrine.

TITIAN.

How this grace
 Speaks his own standing ! what a mental power
 This eye shoots forth ! how big imagination
 Moves in this lip ! to the dumbness of the gesture
 One might interpret !

Timon of Athens. .

How deep the firmament's eternal blue !
 How fair and fruitful is the landscape's hue !
 In power and passion here the Indian boy,
 Drawn by hot leopards, rushes on his joy ;
 Here woman, robed in her Venetian charms,
 Tempts some huge soul to banquet in her arms :
 Or should the dignity of saint and sage
 Demand a mould for Truth or reverend Age,

On the full brow he thrones the power of Jove,
And honies o'er the lips with Christian love ;
To these great tasks a patriarch's life was given,
And his own Angels beckoned him to Heaven.

ALBRECHT DÜRER.

Nascenti homini omnifaria semina et omnigenæ vitæ germina indidit
 Pater : quæ quisque excoluerit illa adolescent, et fructus suos ferent in
 illo. Si vegetalia, planta fiet. Si sensuality, obrutescit. Si rationalia,
 celeste evadit animal. Si intellectualia, Angelus erit et Dei filius.

Pico di Mirandola.

Good Albrecht Dürer ! I have not the heart

To hide thy name in any trick of art.

Thou cunning workman of a thousand shapes,

Knights, virgins, ghostly men and grinning apes !

Thou dreamer of imperishable dreams !

When Melancholy dozed by Lethe's streams ;

When his lean jennet bore Sir Death along

Through bosky dells, by castles high and strong,

What mystical and self-consuming sadness,
Mixed with a gleam of visionary madness,
Chequered the kindest soul which ever smiled,
In the high moods of Genius' busy child !

GIULIO ROMANO.

Mox etiam agrestes Satyros nudavit, et asper
 Incolumi gravitate jocum tentavit : eo quod
 Illecebris erat et gratâ novitate morandus
 Spectator, functusque sacris, et potus, et exlex.

Horatius.

LET loose thy Gods, oh Roman !—Fauns uncouth,
 And a mad crew of vintage-girdled youth
 With their licentious loves : the Bromian lair
 Burns in a torrent of voluptuous air.
 But Venus, leaning from her dove-drawn car,
 To press the sinews of the God of War,
 Or Perseus on his own heroic steed,
 Lend their old beauty to the outworn creed,
 As if the charm of some magician's wand
 Had given fantastic life to all the band.

ALBANO.

They came : sweet music ushered the odorous way,
 And wanton air in twenty sweet forms danced
 After her fingers ; beauty and love advanced
 Their ensigns in the downless rosy faces
 Of youths and maids, led after by the Graces.

Chapman (completion of Marlowe's Hero and Leander).

LAUNCH thy gay pinnace in the noonday beam,
 Let flutes breathe clear o'er Cydnus' crisped stream ;
 The Oreads, scarfed in rainbow zones, are fanned
 By the warm zephyr of this faery-land ;
 Earth gleams with flowers, the air with butterflies,—
 'Tis a gay fable, and like fable dies.

MICHAEL ANGELO CARAVAGGIO.

Our haughty Life is crowned with Darkness.

Wordsworth.

Is this a Judith, Painter, that I see ?
Each woman is a Judith unto thee :
The warlike mail of shadow on the breast,
The full swart limbs, the dusky-folded vest,
And the high profile, blanched with passion's flood,
Belong to Beauty in a guilty mood.

GUIDO RENI.

Guido ist eigentlich der Mahler der Seele.

Schelling.

FAIR as the soul which never dreamed of ill,
Strong as the presence of a virtuous will,
In the white chambers of these downy breasts
The chastest energy of Woman rests ;
In these slight lines of infant innocence
Dwells human beauty undisturbed by sense ;
In these last pangs heroic limbs endure
The spirit triumphs and the heart is pure.

SALVATOR ROSA.

—Questa selva selvaggia ed aspra e forte
 Che nel pensier rinnova la paura.

Dante.

THE sylvan painter from some tangled cave,
 Where feathering larches through the rock-clefts wave,
 On summer days would watch the clouds that sail
 With milky bosoms on the southern gale :
 Or bade fierce winds in Ocean chasms arise
 Which rocked the boughs with fitful harmonies,
 Shattered the crests of mighty groves, and rent
 The glorious earth with that bold element.

Art, like a wood-nymph, passionate and free,
 Went out to summer 'neath the greenwood tree,

When that dear son (enriched with arts and wit
To know mankind and make a friend of it)
Laughed at the gilded lies of Life, and strayed
To the cool depths of mountain ambuscade.

CLAUDE LORRAIN.

Vedi il sole che 'n fronte ti riluce :
 Vedi l' erbetta, i fiori e gli arboscelli
 Che quella terra sol da se produce.

Dante, Purg. xxvii. 136.

THE calm of moonlight and the pomp of day
 Blend with the aery sunbeams on their way,
 To wave in paths of gold on summer seas,
 Smile o'er the earth and sweep the feathery trees.
 The ridge of distant mountains, blue and bare,
 Kisses in light the denser depth of air ;
 And clouds of incense, sea-born strangers, fly
 On the clear breeze of that enchanted sky.

NICOLAS POUSSIN.

The pipe of Pan, to shepherds
 Couched in the shadow of Mænalian pines,
 Was passing sweet ; the eyeballs of the leopards
 That in high triumph drew the Lord of Vines,
 How did they sparkle to the cymbal's clang !
 While Fauns and Satyrs beat the ground
 In cadence, and Silenus swang
 This way and that, with wild flowers crowned.

Wordsworth.

O'ER the red earth the dog-star darts his beams,
 The sullen clouds are lulled in azure gleams,
 The sons of fable in their lusty dance
 Turn the gay nymphs and poise the vine-wreathed lance,
 And youths and maidens 'neath the tented trees
 Wait the cool summons of the freshening breeze.

GASPAR POUSSIN.

He is retired as noontide dew,
 Or fountains in a noonday grove,
 And you must love him, ere to you
 He will seem worthy of your love.
 The outward shows of sky and earth,
 Of hill and valley, he has viewed,
 And impulses of deeper birth
 Have come to him in solitude.

Wordsworth.

IF I could wander where a true sun shines,
 To Grézy Vaudan or thy Apennines,
 Companionable Artist! thou shouldst chuse
 A summer pleasaunce for the happy Muse,
 Near some fair city, or the ruined fanes
 Of the old Gods, the genii of those plains.

Charmed by the witchery of the vernal air
 The sight would revel in a world so fair,

Crest the bold headland, search the dipping glades,
Watch the faint sea-line o'er the glossy shades :
The sunshine dripping through the dense green boughs
Would bathe the painted banks ; and we 'd arouse
A choir of Dian's nymphs from yonder brake
To dance around thee for thy kinsman's sake.

RUBENS.

I have been from my childhood alway of a rumorous and stormy nature.

Martin Luther.

THESE florid limbs the soul of passion fills,
Strength in desire through every muscle thrills;
A world of moving colour round him flies,
Like showers and sunshine in his breezy skies.
The Wind-God and the Sea-God shout aloud,
And urge the tempests on their fins of cloud;
In wild contortions Frenzy, Guilt, Despair,
Are hurled across the battlements of air;
But children all unswathed in summer bowers
Guard luscious fruits and sport with twisted flowers.

REMBRANDT.

Come a raggio di sol che puro mei
 Per fratta nube, già prato di fiori
 Vider coperti d'ombra gli occhi miei ;
 Vid' io così più turbe di splendori
 Fulgurati di su di raggi ardenti
 Senza veder principio di fulgori.

Dante, Parad. xxiii. 34.

FROM murky pits the fiery vapours rise
 Which flare in orange meteors o'er the skies,
 The vault of Heaven is strewn with clouds in flight,
 The chasing whirlwinds urge the dreadful fight,
 Terror sits brooding o'er the forest's gloom,
 Above, a hell of light,—below, a tomb.
 Shed all thy snow-white shafts of light, Oh Day!
 Night! spread thy tent of bistre and of grey;

That Hope and Life, suffused in one bright star,
May, like good planets, send their beams to war
With all the gloom that age, or grief, or death
Can fling across the upward ways of Faith.

RUYSDAEL.

There is something of softness, not unallied to sorrow, in these mild winter days and their humid sunshine.

Londor.

GREY river! down the mountain stepping-stones
From piny glens above thy torrent moans;
Bare are the stems of fir which winter's blast
(Scarce spent as yet) across the crags has cast;
Thick atmospheres, and sullen evergreen
Hang their dense curtain round the sober scene.
O uninhabitable wilderness!
O home for discontent or shy distress!
The Artist loved thy sternly saddened air,
But never human image placed he there.

ALBERT CUYP.

Ergo tua rura manebunt
Et tibi magna satis ; quamvis lapis omnia nudus,
Limosoque palus obducatur pascua junco.

Virgil.

THE moisten'd lowlands, delicately clear,
Through the thin haze and morning gleam appear ;
On the smooth herbage cattle graze or sleep,
The neatherds by the rushy streamlet keep
Their quiet watch, until the day expire,
And slanting sunbeams gild the village spire.

WOUVERMANS.

They will tell you by rote where services were done ; at such and such a sconce, at such a breach, at such a convoy ; who came off bravely, who was shot, who disgraced, what terms the enemy stood on, and this they can perfectly in the phrase of war.

Henry V.

THE tucket sounds : dash on, thou Flemish grey !

Speed, bold Walloon, to join the gathering fray !

The skirmish reeks to heaven ; a tawny cloud

Wraps the hot combat in its frightful shroud ;

In mortal battle struggling for the van,

Horse rolls on horse, and man must slaughter man.

VANDYKE, REYNOLDS, AND TITIAN.

(A SAYING OF NORTHCOTE.)

At least thy pictures look a voice, and we
Imagine sounds, deceived to that degree,
We think 't is somewhat more than just to see.

Dryden.

VANDYKE upon his faithful canvass spread
The pictured portrait of the mighty dead ;
Reynolds the graces of his age revives,
And in his magic glass their image lives ;
But Titian's portraits, eloquently clear,
Are living men,—they think, they speak, they hear !

MORALÈS.

Tra me si va nella città dolente.

Dante.

Know ye that haughtier and severer land,
Where Art was led by Philip's marble hand,
Through laurel groves and crypts of sacred dread,
Where torches flash upon the palaced dead?
There He surnamed Divine—divine in woe,
Bade all the mysteries of torture glow;
In trickling gore the writhing Saint he bathed,
In robes of black th' ecstatic martyr swathed,
He made the Cross of Jesus more austere,
And drew Devotion in the garb of Fear.

VELASQUEZ.

He had perceived the presence and the power
 Of greatness ; and deep feeling had impressed
 Great objects on his mind, with portraiture
 And colour so distinct, that on his mind
 They lay like substances, and almost seemed
 To haunt the bodily sense.

Wordsworth.

YET there some gallant, stately as the Cid,
 Springs from the canvass, if the Master bid ;
 Waves the towered standard of Castille again,
 And checks his charger with a soldier's rein.
 Yet there some visage, tried in cunning strife,
 Hides the shrewd secret of a statesman's life ;
 Yet there some monarch in his knighthood stands,
 Spurns the low earth and half that earth commands.

MURILLO.

Vidi a voi, Donna, portare
 Ghirlandetta di fior gentile,
 E sovra lei vidi volare
 Angiolet d'Amore umile,
 E nel suo cantar sottile
 Diceva : Chi mi vedrà
 Lauderà il mio Signore.

Dante.

THERE too the cheerful Andalusian drew
 In melting colour all his fancy knew :
 No solemn saints, nor forms of glorious youth
 In the high stature of eternal Truth,
 But, buoyed on incense, sportive cherubs rode,
 Tossed up their arms and round the maiden crowed.
 Some village maiden lent the Virgin's face
 Its sprightly coyness and its simple grace,

Some rustic girl who scarce an hour before
With those dark urchins frolicked by the door.
All natural graces in their forms abide,—
But natural graces all beatified.

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